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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2009

Office of the Mayor and City Council
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza - 10th Floor
El Paso, Texas 79901

Dear Members of the El Paso City Council:

I regret that I am unable to appear before the City Council today to personally share my concerns regarding the resolution that urges the federal government to support "an honest, open national debate on ending the prohibition on narcotics." Please know that it was my intent to attend this Council meeting. However, a meeting with Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Mexican President Felipe Calderon created an unavoidable scheduling conflict for me.

I, along with the City Council and the people of El Paso, have been deeply disturbed by the escalating violence in Juarez, as well as the safety, security, and economic impact these events will have on our community. While this resolution is well-intentioned, I believe its passage would be counterproductive to our efforts to enact an ambitious legislative agenda at the federal level. For this reason, I urge you to vote against overriding Mayor John Cook's veto.

As our nation faces one of the worst economic crises since the Great Depression, Congress is currently crafting an economic stimulus package in which El Paso stands to benefit. This is where our focus must be at this critical time, and it is important that our message reflect priorities that will provide real gains for the community.

I commend the resolution's supporters for expressing support for our sister city. I share your concerns and will continue my efforts in Congress to maintain support for federal measures to help restore peace and stability in Mexico. However, for the above stated reason, I urge you to vote against overriding Mayor Cook's veto.

Sincerely,

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress